

ARTIST MEMBERS' ANNUAL MEETING

All artist members are invited to the annual meeting which will be held on Friday, June 10 at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at the California School of Fine Arts, 800 Chestnut Street. Dinner will be served. A tape will be played, which was made by Lloyd Goodrich after the jurying of the last Annual. Ballots will be counted for Council and artist Board Member vacancies. Council committees will report on their work during the past year. The price is \$1.50. Reservations must be made by Wednesday, June 8. Call ORdway 3-2640.

IS THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION NECESSARY?

Each of us asks this question in some form or other at least once a year when we pay our dues; some of us ask it more often when we see one of the annual exhibitions, enroll for a course in the School or when we bring a painting or sculpture to the Art Bank.

The answer to the question seems to have been simple enough in 1871 when a few artists and patrons gathered in Juan B. Wandesforde's home and began formation of the Association. The West was a "cultural desert" in those days. So far as the visual arts were concerned, patrons and artists were few and there was little enough time for either. In 1960, almost ninety years later, the answer to the question seems, initially, at least, to be a little less simple. The West is no longer a cultural desert. There are many patrons and many artists. There are many institutions intended to provide for both of them.

About two months ago, our Board of Directors began study of the Association and its many activities in order to prepare for the future, the next five or ten years, if not the next ninety. Basic to such study was the careful analysis of the Association as it now stands, its purpose and services and its effect upon the artist and the public. The first question asked was, "What does the Association do?" and the second "Why can't some other organization or private group do it better?" Both are realistic, important questions. Both must be faced before we can go on with certainty into an uncertain future.

First, what does the Art Association do? A recollection of how valuable the Association was during the formative years of culture in San Francisco is no longer sufficient. Our lives are based on what we accomplish, not upon golden memories of what was accomplished. Today, the Association supports an art school, sponsors annual exhibitions, maintains the only information center for contemporary art on the West Coast, publishes a monthly Newsletter, represents the interests of living, creating artists to the general public, and through these activities becomes a center — spiritual, intellectual and creative — for involvement, invention and achievement in contemporary art.

The second question "Why can't some other organization or private group do it better?" will be answered in the next issue.

To be continued

Fred Martin,
Executive Secretary of the
San Francisco Art Association.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CRITICISM

by David Simpson
(Part II)

*"I heard a little chicken chirp:
My name is Thomas, Thomas Earp!
And I can neither paint nor write
I can only set other people right.*

*All people that can write or paint
Do tremble under my complaint.
For I am a chicken, and I can chirp
and my name is Thomas, Thomas Earp."*

—D.H. Lawrence

Any list of critics worthy of the name should include Fairfield Porter and Harold Rosenberg.

In a way, Rosenberg is too good. Too good, at least, at coining catchy phrases which sound explanatory. Rosenberg, as everyone knows, invented the term "action painting". In fact, it seems likely he invented action painting itself. I use "invented" because it has always appeared that many artists assumed his analyses of what they were doing was accurate.

It seems unlikely to me that artists did what Rosenberg called a sort of "dance" within the "arena" of the canvas, until he told them that's what they were doing. I don't say this simply because I don't care for dancing, which is true. The point is, I'll never be convinced that Pollock wandered out into his painting with any invitation to the Waltz on his mind. He was really just trying to paint a picture, and the canvas was so large, the only way he could get to the middle was to walk out there.

Rosenberg's term may, however, be partly appropriate. The danger, which Rosenberg himself warns of at the outset of his original article, is that he may be taken too literally.

"What makes any definition of a movement in art dubious ..." he says, "... is that it never fits the deepest artists in the movement ...". The very fact that he speaks of a "movement"; as a concrete phenomena, carries the implication that it may be completely understood, and his caution is made meaningless.

The concept always overflows the word(s) used to describe it. Obviously, this fact works to the advantage of the artist, once he understands it. Whatever explanation we make of art, the art itself remains irrevocably unchanged. This means that what we say is possible, by way of clarifying our art, but at the same time, art is always more than we say it is.

To return to the danger involved in accepting theories as totalities, many artists seem to fit their work to the theory of their critics, and actually try to confine themselves to it. To do this is to sacrifice that discretion which is the better part of valour.

If action painting exists at all, it should contain more than the absurd notion of the artist as actor or dancer. If an artist requires the sort of existential proof of his being alive which dancing provides - all right. Too often the artist thinks only of maintaining an aggressive lead in his dance, without the realization that the ballroom is crowded with spectators for whom the sight of the dance, in its complete form, is also a unique act. Seeing the dance is as important a part of art as the action painting it. Fancy footwork alone, is not enough. To put it bluntly, paintings are meant to be seen, as well as painted.

It is of course the responsibility of the artist to avoid falling under the spell of his literary spokesmen. We must be aware of the fact that assuming a movement exists, by the time it coalesces (perhaps congeals would be the better word), into theory, its values can only be peripheral.

Science, unlike art, often begins with theory, and searches out supporting truth. Art begins with the search, already has the truth, if it really be art, and ends (dies), with theory.

To be an artist is to search.

(Mr. Simpson is an art instructor at American River Junior College. In the past year, he has held one-man shows at the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Santa Barbara Art Museum and is scheduled for exhibition at the Phoenix Art Museum.)

ART BANK REPORT

The following artists were exhibited at the SFAA Gallery during the month of April: Allen, Armer, Barletta, Cardeiro, DuCasse, Kaner, Loberg, Nadalini, Saford, Giambruni and Ward.

The Contemporary Figurative Painters Traveling Exhibition was sent to Kent, Ohio.

Gurdon Woods, SFAA Executive Director, gave a talk on contemporary art at the First Unitarian Church in San Francisco. Works by Nakano, Siegrist, Sinton, Waserstein, Anderson and Tolerton were shown in conjunction with Mr. Woods' Lecture.

A traveling exhibition composed of works by the following artists was sent to Taft College: Bischoff, Wessels, Nepote, Schoener, Allen, DuCasse, Chun, Miyasaki, Kasten, Pinkerton, Barletta, Brown, Kaner and Morehouse.

Visitors to the Art Bank included Creighton Bell, University of Leeds, England; Robert J. Schoelkopf, Jr., Zabriskie Gallery, N.Y.; Constance Perkins, Occidental College.

Volunteer workers for the month of April: Frances Baldwin, Katherine Barieau and Ellen Bransten.

C.S.F.A.

The Tama University of Fine Arts in Tokyo is currently showing an exhibition of prints and drawings by C.S.F.A. students in connection with the 25th anniversary of the university. According to Mr. Kinji Inoue, President of the university, it is the "best cultural project" of the anniversary. The following students are exhibiting: Jerrold Ballaine, Dorrit Bauer, Joan Brown, Lucy Carmalt, Wanda Courtney, John Dunlop, Lynn Faus, Howard Foote, Donald Fowler, Robert Hudson, Alvin Light, K. Lee Manual, Alfred O'Shaughnessy, Elizabeth Peltzer, Alfred Pfaffenberger, Neil Stark, Lina Stevenson, Sylvia Vince, William Wiley and Carole Wong.

The Annual Student Exhibition which is held each spring in conjunction with Commencement will remain on view to the public until June 13. Hours are from 9:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday.

Chachich, C.S.F.A. alumnus, is exhibiting at the Edward Dean Gallery in San Francisco through June 10.

GOODBYE GREEKS

by Carl Hertel

In a recent lecture, medievalist and former president of Mills College, Dr. Lynn White cheered the fact that after 2000 years we are finally freeing ourselves from the now unnatural Greek heritage. Aside from our colleges and universities which he feels are still producing Greeks for an ungreek world, Dr. White sees science progressing through such ungreek methods as non-euclidian geometry. He sees art becoming an adequate reflection of the times through such ungreek approaches to subject as expressionism and certain forms of nonobjectivism. By "Greeks", Dr. White refers to three attitudes which seem to have plagued western society for 2000 years: 1) the attitude that there are the Greeks (good guys) and then there are the barbarians (bad guys); 2) the attitude that there are freemen, "citizens", entitled to culture and education and then there are the "slaves" not entitled to any privileges; 3) the attitude of naive materialism which overlooks the realities of atomic theory and insists upon the solidity of matter with static and conservative absolutism. It was with the emancipation from these attitudes in mind that I recently viewed the exhibition at the L. A. County Museum called "Sculpture in Our Time" from the Hirshhorn Collection.

It would be inane to insist the classical and antique influences are not evident in this fabulous collection. Yet, notwithstanding Maillol's Praxitilian sensuousity and Manzu's Roman realism, it is evident that the ungreek is the most important

aspect of 19th and 20th century sculpture to be found in this show. For example, Lipschitz' "Orpheus" bronze, classical in subject, but unclassical in treatment, sings an entirely modern song of joy through the delineation of appendage-like projections relentlessly reaching for ecstasy in a dynamic arrangement of forms incompatible with Greek ideas about the static and organic mode of composing. Even Barlach's highly simplified "Russian Beggar Woman" with its planar abstraction ends up entirely ungreek in the expressiveness of details like the hands and gesture of the curving contours which are as dynamic as any work in the show. It is interesting to note that the earlier sculptors in this group (Barlach, Lipschitz, Kollowitz, etc.) seem easily able to express more with less than any of the younger and often overbearing, eventually boring dramatists from later in the century. Obvious exceptions to such a "rule" are Flannagan's "Mother and Child" and "Woman with Fox", both of which retain the shape of field stones (although cast) while presenting highly developed but subtly sculptured forms. Flannagan's pieces arise East Asian - like out of the material filled with the power of imminent release. This is not to say that the sensational expressionistic work lacks interest - from from it. To walk into the gallery filled with these works is unimaginably exciting. However, one feels secure in saying that the excitement aroused by the pieces which limit their exploitation of form, surface and material will last longer (presumably forever) than

the more immediate stimulation aroused by the Marinis, Butlers and Moores lying, rising and writhing in space.

The timely and gratifying ungreekeness of this exhibition is manifested in terms of all three of Dr. White's "attitudes". The barbarian element everywhere evident is epitomized in Picasso's "Head of a Woman" with its wholly unserious and intentional primitivism. The anti-aristocratic element is evident in the romanticism which characterizes the subject and treatment of the majority of pieces and is epitomized in the almost vulgar "Visitation" by Epstein. Although few of the pieces could be said to deny the solidity of mass per se there is a feeling of something quite moving and certainly intangible being expressed through the use of solid forms. In the sculptures by painters such as Matisse and Bonnard, there is much more implied than stated, so much so in fact, that the form is hardly evident. The epitome of this tendency is found in de Rivera's chrome "Abstraction" which is constantly changing form as it turns on its motor-activated axis.

(Editor's Note: The Hirshhorn Collection may be seen at the De Young Museum from June 10 through July 10)

(Carl Hertel is an art history instructor at Mt. San Antonio College. His paintings have been exhibited at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. National Society of Arts and Letters, Los Angeles Art Institute, Scripps College, San Gabriel Annual and Newport and Chaffey Annuals.)

ARTIST MEMBER NOTES AND NEWS

Henri Marie-Rose gave a lecture on African sculpture at the Oakland Public Museum last month.

Dilexi Gallery had a one-man show of sculpture by **Jeremy Anderson** during the month of May.

A painting by **Evelyn Kane** is on exhibit in the annual juried show at Newport Harbor School. She is also represented in the invitational shows at the Westland Schools and in the Westside Jewish Community Center.

Dorothy Brown has been teaching a special class consisting of a series of lectures on the "The Emergence of Modern Painting" at UCLA extension.

The Oakland Art Museum named **June Felter** as one of the award winners in the "Painted Flower" exhibit at the Museum.

Gerd Koch is having a one-man exhibit at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Alden C. Mason won first award in the Northwest Watercolor Society's 20th Annual Exhibit at the Seattle Art Museum.

The following members were represented in the California Society of Etchers' 45th National Print Exhibition, which was held at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor: **Dennis Beall, Robert Bechtle, Eleanor Guttridge, John Ihle, Karl Kasten, Roland Peterson, Nick Vaccaro, and Beth Van Hoesen.**

Shirley Rousseau Murphy will be included in an invitational show of some fifty women painters at the San Monica Library through June 24. She is exhibiting currently at the Newport Annual, California Watercolor Society's drawing annual, and Society's drawing annual, and in a two-man show at the Light House in Hermosa Beach. She was represented recently at the Tuscon Annual and the SFAA Painting and Sculpture Annual.

Helen Rousseau has two drawings in the Watercolor Society's Drawing Show and also exhibited at Tuscon.

Hayward King is exhibiting at the Edward Dean Gallery in San Francisco through June 10.

NEW MEMBERS

Participating: **Mr. and Mrs. James A. Folger.**

Regular: **Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Benoist, Mrs. Dexter Bramhall, George D. Culler, Mrs. Frank R. Girard, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mayer, Mrs. Charles Noble, Mrs. C.R. St. Aubyn, Mrs. Walter Schilling.**

Artist: **Gordon Cook, Ellwood Graham, Robert Craig Kauffman, Walter Snelgrove, Leland Staven, James Strombotne.**

The California School of Fine Arts is losing a valued member of its staff, **J. Edward Murphy**, who is returning with his family to England. Mr. Murphy has made a great contribution in his five years on the staff, both in promoting the growth of the library and in developing the art history area of the college curriculum.

REMEMBER TO VOTE YES ON THE BRUNDAGE ISSUE, PROPOSITION A - JUNE 7

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